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WRESTLING THEN & NOW

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EDITORIAL

It's a rainy winter Sunday in 1972. I'm 12 years old and being trapped in the house is a torture I can no longer bear...

My mom's cooking dinner, and my father's reading the Sunday paper. I'm staring blankly at the t.v., bored to death by the musty old film that I'm barely watching.

"Anything else on?" my mom asks as she breaks away from the kitchen and notices the boredom painted on my face.

She begins turning the dial and when she hits that mysterious U on the old B&W Motorola, wrestling just happens to be on.

"Did you ever watch wrestling?" she asks me.

"No."

"Grandpa used to take me every week...Eastern Parkway Arena in Brooklyn. I saw Gorgeous George...Rocca...Gene Stanley...you should have seen Rocca walk the ropes.

A beer bellied, balding man is taking a pounding from a monstrous, younger villain. It's Chief Jay Strongbow, and as he takes more and more punishment, my eyes grow bigger. He looks like he'll crumple like a rag doll at any second. Nobody can take that much punishment I think to myself! I feel the incredible intensity blast through the t.v. set. This man who doesn't even look like an athlete, goes into his war dance and the crowd explodes as this aging David pins Goliath.

I didn't know it, but I was hooked forever...

To this day, it's very rare for me to spend a weekend without wrestling on t.v. I don't always like what I see anymore, and often don't even pay attention. Yet it's like a dear old friend who's always there when I need it.

Thanks, mom...

WRESTLING THEN AND NOW is published monthly at $1.25 a copy. 6 issue subscriptions are available for $6.00. Overseas add $1.00 per issue (please send U.S. postal orders in U.S. funds).

MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO EVAN GINZBURG.

The address again is Wrestling Then & Now/P.O. Box 471/Oakland Gardens Station/Flushing, N.Y. 11364.

Readers, we need your Reader Profiles, nostalgic anecdotes, letters and any other materials you would like to contribute. I have been delighted by the great critical response WT&N has gotten from the various bulletin editors and hope you will tell a friend to tell a friend about us. There is a tremendous amount of time and effort that goes into any sheet and I need and appreciate your support! I have been impressed by the volume of mail and hope the letter page will continue to be a lively part of this sheet. Your letters let me know what you want to see in WT&N and are thus an integral part of this project working. Once again, thank you and enjoy...

BULLETIN REVIEWS (A.K.A. PLUG-O-RAMA!)

BETWEEN THE ROPES- The sample I received had an interesting interview with Ron West, former general manager of the CWF & NACW...plus news... $1 from Adam Horowitz at 336 Harbor Dr., Lido Beach, N.Y. 11561.

THE CANDADIAN WRESTLING REPORT- Good graphics/strong Canadian nostalgia page. $1 from 15 Penrose Ave., Kitchener, Ont. N2A 1E9.

FACTSHEET FIVE- 125 plus pages of fanzine/bulletin reviews. Not much wrestling but plenty of comics, poetry, music zines etc. An impressive achievement. Well worth $3 cover price from Mike Gunderloy/6 Arizona Ave. Rensselaer, N.Y. 12144-4502.

RINGS AROUND THE NORTHWEST- Great regional coverage. Only .50¢ from Mike Rodgers at 2470 SE Lewellyn/Troutdale, Or. 97060. CHECKITOUT!

THE RING POST NEWSLETTER- Features heel columnist(!) Don Moretti and reader attacks on him! Different. $1 from Francesco Castano- 13135 Colton Lane/Gaithersburg, MD. 20878.

VOICE OF THE MAT- Both nostalgia & recent results, xeroxed newspaper articles, card reviews. Ken Levitt- 4310 Beach 43rd St. Bklyn, N.Y. 11224

WRESTLING PERSPECTIVE- Critically acclaimed "analysis and commentary from 2 guys who love professional wrestling." $1 from PO Box 401- Camillus, NY 13031-0401

INSIDE NEWS

If you're interested in all the details on the infamous Mr. Saito/Ken Patera vs. police "shoot" (which won best match of the year on several polls), here's the deal. SPORTS BABYLON, a recent book by Mark Sabljak and Martin H. Greenberg goes into all the shockingly gory details that the sheets may have missed out on. If you <u>really</u> want to know how an Olympic hero ends up in a jail cell, this won't disappoint...It's by Bell Publishing Co., distributed by Crown and you'll probably find it in the discount section. Lots of other juicy sports stories where your heroes turn out to be zeros (i.e. Denny McLain).

For those of you out there that need to know absolutely EVERYTHING about wrestling here's something so trivial no other sheet probably picked it up: the WWF records their Wrestlemania spots and theme music at Pyramid Studios in N.Y.C. (I know hearts are racing everywhere having picked up this vital piece of info).

This reminds me: I recently had the opportunity to speak to a religious scholar who informed me that our society is sadly misinformed about conditions in Hell. He stated that the eternal hellfire theory is long-outdated. Instead, he's discovered that in the deepest part of Hell, they play WWF tunes non-stop and you get to see Lanny Poffo and Brutus Beefcake matches on the giant video screen. "It's really like a big disco," he said. "The only problem is that you never get to leave..."

READER PROFILE- BOYCE JOHANSEN

The Thrill Of Women- The Agony Of The Post

I'd like to be remembered by my friends as someone who likes being part of the action. I always rub it into my friend Rodney about how Road Warrior Hawk used **my** chair in a crowd brawl against Samu in the NWA's sole '89 appearance in Denver, or how on an ICW card Kerry Von Erich held up **my** sign that said "South Africa Sucks" against Col. Debeers. But one thing my friend Rodney always reminds me when I start rambling on about all my wrestling "accomplishments" is a story that happened...oh, about March of '88. It was during a match pitting "Playboy" (now Doughboy- 350 lbs. worth) Buddy Rose vs. "Too Cold" Scorpio (a local jobber). 7 or so minutes into the match I was drooling on the floor over Rose's valet. I decided to turn on the old charm and get into the Spotlight once more. So I strolled over to her to get her autograph (they love that). Here's the embarrasing part. Rose bounded off the ropes (remember- 350 lbs. slamming into ring ropes that were set up in about 15 minutes don't hold too good), causing the wooden ring post to break and bounce off my skull, knocking me to the floor. I thought the woman had slapped me goofy, but was soon relieved that she was asking me if I was ok. So remember Mr. Ginzburg if I ever get to bragging and boasting, just say...**TIMBER!**

My favorite wrestlers are Ric Flair, Kerry Von Erich, Larry Zybysko, Mike Rotundo, Roddy Piper and The Road Warriors. I hate Hogan and Hulk-a-Mania.

One more thing...add my vote for the Flair statue.

NOSTALGIA PROFILE- TONY ALTIMORE

By Howard Feintuch

When we think of great tag teams of modern times, we think of such duos as The Road Warriors, The Midnight Express and The Steiners. The "creme of the crop" in tag teams of the past was The Sicilians. The Sicilians consisted of Lou Albano and Tony Altimore and were one of the most successful duos in the 1960's. Most fans of today know who Lou Albano is, through his exploits as a manager in the WWf. This feature is devoted to Albano's tag partner, Tony Altimore, an equally talented wrestler and legend from the past. Hopefully, this feature will enlighten the readers about Tony Altimore, a wrestler of the past worth mentioning in the present.

As a youngster growing up in Stanford, Conn., Tony Altimore was highly competitive in amateur wrestling. He was extremely successful and reigned as heavyweight champion in junior high and high school. After high schol, Altimore joined the 82nd Air Borne Division for two and a half years. Upon completion of his service, Tony became the head lifeguard of his native Stanford. One day Altimore was approached by Toots Mondt (the trainer and manager of the world famous Antonio Rocca) about becoming a professional wrestler. The idea appealed to the young Altimore and he soon began training at the famous Broccner's Gym for a pro career.

Tony Altimore eventually hooked up with Lou Albano and together they were known as "The Sicilians".

"We were a tag team for 13 years. That makes us the longest lasting team in professional wrestling," boasted Altimore.

During Altimore's tenure as the tag team partner of Albano, the two would achieve world wide success. One of the highlights of Altimore's career was when he wrestled at Caminsky Park in 1964.

TONY ALTIMORE INTERVIEW CONTINUED

"It was the first big wrestling show," said Altimore. "It drew 38,000 people and was also the night I (along with Albano) defeated Don Curtis and Mark Lewin for the U.S. tag team championship."

During the majority of his career after hooking up with Albano, Altimore rarely wrestled in singles. He was featured at wrestling shows all over the world in such places as Tokyo, Bankok and Italy, along with every major wrestling city in the United States.

Currently Tony Altimore can be found training aspiring pro wrestlers at Paserillo's Quest Wrestling School in Orange, Conn.

"Some of the talent who turned pro that we trained, includes Paul Roma, Ted Arcidi, Bam Bam Bigelow and "Pretty Boy" Larry Sharpe, who was one of my original students," Altimore noted.

Tony also keeps busy promoting wrestling fund raisers in the New England area.

(**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Howard Feintuch puts outs **THE WRESTLING INSIDERS**--only $1 per issue at 6218 Greenblade Garth/Columbia, Md. 21045)

WRESTLING TIME MACHINE

Let's climb on board again as we leap back to 1978 for a battle of legends...

Ex-Champion SuperStar Billy Graham took on current World-Wide Wrestling Federation kingpin Bob Backlund in what turned out to be a classic confrontation at Madison Square Garden. It was one of the most exciting and brutal matches ever witnessed by any fan.

Like a roaring tiger, SuperStar came out attacking Backlund before the bell even rang. Backlund was stunned and Graham took advantage of him by kicking, punching and biting. The Star dominated most of the battle, almost pinning Backlund for a three count, but the champ's foot was on the rope.

After even more punishment was inflicted upon him, the All-American boy made an impressive comeback and attempted to give SuperStar his patented atomic knee drop. Graham grabbed the ropes, thus avoiding this devastating maneuver and soon regained the advantage.

Dragging Backlund outside the ring, Graham repeatedly smashed his rival's head on the iron ringpost, drawing a great deal of blood. At this point, the match was stopped, and awarded to Graham.

As long as Madison Square Garden features stunning main-events like the Backlund-Graham battle, they should attempt to uplift the quality of the preliminary matches which pit the greatest wrestlers in the world against far from great competition.

(**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The preliminary matches I was complaining about on this 3/20/78 show were as follows: Tatsumi Fujinami W Gypsey Rodriguez for the JR. Heavyweight title, Seiji Sakaguchi Def. Wilehim Ruska in a judo jacket match, Dick Slater Def. Baron Scicluna, Steve Keirn & Mike Graham Def. Butcher Vachon & The Golden Terror (Pete Doherty), Chief Peter Maivia Def. Stan Stasiak, Spiros Arion W Larry Zybysko & Dusty Rhodes/Mil Mascaras/Andre The Giant W Fuji/Tanaka/Patera...note the strong influx of talent from other areas in "showcase" bouts. Next issue's "Wrestling Time Machine" is a 1980 piece where I predicted future world champions. Some of the guesses were right on the money while others were way, way off. Hindsight can be interesting...)

WHEN WRESTLING MEETS REALITY
OR LIFESTYLES OF THE PATHETIC AND HOPELESS PART 3

I was watching WrestleWar 90 over at my buddy Stevie's house. Stevie's 40 and generally a mild-mannered, low-key kind of fellow, and when his nephew Scott (another close friend of mine) popped by for the main-event I was more than delighted.

In no way though, was I prepared for the hostility and violence that was about to hit Stevie's neat little bedroom.

"Next time I borrow something, I don't need you to tell me a dozen times to return it...I do enough for you!"

Before he'd even taken off his coat, he flung Stevie's entertainment card onto the table in disgust. The card entitled the bearer to half price meals at certain restaurants. It also was about to be the focal point of a battle so ferocious in its intensity that the ongoing Andersons-Steiners bout would pale in comparison.

"Yeah...yeah...yeah..." Stevie said as he tried to concentrate on the big title match.

"Don't yeah...yeah...me" Scott fumed. "Do you know how much money I save you by doing your teeth?"

Scott's a dentist; most people aren't aware that dentists have savagely violent tempers and enjoy drilling teeth and making gums bleed because it unleashes all kinds of latent hostilities.

"Yeah, yeah..." Stevie said again.

It simply wasn't the answer Scott was looking for.

Scott started cursing Uncle Stevie like a "dirty yellow egg-sucking dog" (as Terry Funk would say). Being his Uncle, Stevie exhibited his authority by spitting at Scott's feet and banishing him from seeing the upcoming Luger-Flair match. It was more intense than any of the interviews the whole evening, particularly when Scott flung Stevie's 8 track tapes to the floor (Stevie's hoping against hope that like certain fashions, 8 tracks will somehow come back in style and that one magical day he'll be able to play them again). There was a classic face to face challenge ("Go ahead, I'll mess you up!") as well, and I began to worry that one might actually "take their best shot."

This family was about to be torn apart...even worse, I had missed the end of the Steiners match!

Hurricane Scott stormed out of the room after exhibiting even more of his unique interior decorating techniques. He sat in the other room throughout the entire Flair match (he was probably reliving the tender dental torture scenes from Marathon Man.) Just as Flair retained his belt, however, he came in and had his final say.

"You know, you're a jackass, but I love you!"

"Yeah...yeah," Stevie said with a smile.

It was another touching moment in the lifestyles of the pathetic and hopeless.

READER REQUESTS

Subscribers can feel free to submit requests; items for sale or trade, etc. **SPACE PERMITTING**, I will publish as many as possible:

Ferk (1498-M Reisterstown Rd. #243/Baltimore, Md. 21208) is "looking for info on and pictures and videos of Balt. independent wrestler (Medardo) Jim Leon...he wrestled small shows for indpendent promoters in Tenn. and elsewhere in the South, and in the NE. He wrestled under his own name, Jim Leon, and later as "Ricki Lawless" and as "The Cuban Assassin" in the NWF." **LOOKING TO BUY RELATED ITEMS!**

LETTERS

Since closing up business with Wrestling Watch two years ago, due to lack of time, I have lost touch with the wrestling scene. I just don't have any time to watch any more except for some pay per view and an occasional Sat. Night Main Event. People still send me copies of bulletins and other paraphanalia which I usually don't pay much attention to. However, in reading your 1st issue of WT&N, I was pleasantly reminded of my old days as editor. Even though I don't watch much anymore, enclosed is $6.00 for 6 months of your publications which was informative and even made me laugh out loud. It's great work and I wish you all the luck in the world. Knowing how much pain and suffering goes into a bulletin, I would be more than glad to help you in any way.

GARY THOMPSON
Bowie, MD.

It's letters like yours that make it all worth it...**E.G.**

Just got WT&N #2 today, & I enjoyed it except for of all things, my letter. The way you've got it edited down, it sounds like I'm nothing but a friggin' braggart, just dropping in to tell you what I've done, then so long! I'm sure others will read it, & think, "Boy, this guy must think he's hot...who cares who he's written for!" That's the way it comes across, anyway, & that's not what I intended!

I don't mind you printing what I wrote you, but, I wish you had added some of my compliments on your fine first issue, as I wanted others to know how much I enjoyed it, & what a good future I believe WT&N has.

All I was doing when I wrote you about my past writings was to give you info on my background, so you'd know I wasn't some 15 year old "rookie." Sorry it came out the way it did.

DAVID WILLIAMSON
Cleveland, TN.

Sorry, David. I thought your background read like a "mini-history" of wrestling fandom and that younger fans would see that even sheets have a strong tradition. Believe me, I appreciate all your kind words!-**E.G.**

I truly enjoyed the first issue of your new bulletin. It was thoroughly entertaining. Keep up the columns about matches from the past. We've needed a bulletin focusing on this type of material for a long time.

NICK GEORGES
Chicago, Il.

I enjoyed your wrestling newsletter...mention the old "Sunyside Gardens..." Do a story on whatever became of Ray Morgan, wrestling at The Olympic Auditorium in L.A., Jimmy Lennon, etc.

When you write about your trips to Tijuana during Christmas time you should open with: "Nothing gets me in the festive holiday mood like seeing bleeding and sweaty wrestlers in the squared circle of Tijuana, Mexico!"

MIKE EINHORN
San Diego, Ca.

This guy's got better punchlines that I do!-**E.G.**

CELEBRITIES I'D LIKE TO DDT (A.K.A. CHEAP THERAPY DEPT- PT. 1)

Since Vince McMahon has introduced the non-wrestling celebrity to the grappling world, I thought it would be fair game to introduce a few names of people I'd like to get inside a ring with...

I may add to this list in future issue (when I feel a nervous breakdown is impending and I need to let off steam). Anyway, here goes...

Ed (I made $80 million by laughing on cue) McMahon, Dick (let 'em lip-sync; this is a business not an art!) Clark, Diana (ego supreme) Ross, Pat ($60,000 a week and my show rots) Sajak, Bill (one can never do enough commercials) Cosby, Lionel (calculated sensitivty) Richie, most politicians, any baseball player who sells autographs to children, any batter who hits under .250 and still makes over $250,000, any pro athlete who **really** thinks that what he's doing is more important than what a teacher/cop/fireman etc. are doing, any basketball player that prostitutes his name by promoting $175 sneakers to ghetto kids knowing that it results in robbery, murder and an increased drug trade, Axl Rose and Public Enemy's Griff for misusing their fame to spread racism, R&B singers who sell out to reach a crossover audience, musicians who play musak but call it jazz, any son or daughter of a celebrity who claim they "made it completely on their own," Donald Trump for representing all that is wrong with the materialistic 80's & 90's, New Kids On The Block for actually going on record and saying that they deserve everything they have because they've "paid their dues," (tell this to a 60 year old jazz saxophonist who's mastered his craft and is lucky to make $100 a nite), and of course Vince McMahon himself for destroying the quality of a once-great federation!

Whew! Now I feel better!-**E.G**

RESULTS- TRI-STATE WRESTLING(INDIE)- Temple Univ. Phila, Pa. 3/31 A-1300
(Composite ratings with Gary Fishman, Brad Burns & Adam Horowitz)

1. Chief Jules Strongbow W Randy "He-Man" Lewis D.Q. 11:48(felt longer) -(Negative)2 horrendous stars. Lewis massively built.
2. Rockin' Rebel W C.N. Redd (with Ron Shaw) 12:59 1* Worked hard but green.
3. Tony Stetson NC Johnny Hot Body- Taped Fist/1st Blood Match 11:26- Brutal brawl/hot action/abrupt ending as both bled simultaneously. 2 3/4*
4. Dr. Tom Pritchard (with Paul E. Dangerously) W Cheetah Kid 16:40- Great scientific & aeriel moves from these underrated guys. 3¼*
5. MAD DOG D.C. DRAKE W LARRY WINTERS "I Quit Match" 37:00- MATCH OF THE YEAR! One of the greatest bloodbath brawls I've ever witnessed in 16 years of attending live cards. They hit each other with everything in sight/brawled throughout the arena/and even took it into the press box above the arena where D.C. tried to throw Larry out the window! This was up there with Abdullah's craziest brawls. D.C.'s manager, "The Captain" got on mike and made believe he was Winters when ref wasn't looking and "quit," which led to a 10 minute post-match brawl with all the indie guys trashing the place. UNBELIEVABLE. 4¼*
6. Misty Blue W Kat Lerouux 9:52 Typical 1*.
7. Paul Orndorff W Austin Idol (with Paul E.) Neither guy worked but Idol beat on Paul E. after bout & jumped by Lawler! 1*
8. Kerry Von Erich W Jerry Lawler D.Q.- Match nothing special but "King" is ultimate heel(see comments next pg.). 2*
9. Tully Blanchard W Bigelow- **Cage**- One of the worst cage matches I've ever seen. Both looked sluggish. 1*

INDIE UPDATE CONTINUED

Bravo to promoter Joel Goodheart and his Tri-State promotion. Not only did he put on a memorable card with what could end up being the match of the year in **any** promotion, he drew a big crowd. Lawler signed a zillion autographs at intermission and within 2 minutes in the ring the fans **hated** the guy again. He **is** the master heel. He called one black fan "Sambo" and said that "If you wet your lips and stuck them to the wall we'd never get you off of it!" I thought there would be a lynch mob for him, but even the Black fans laughed--it was like everyone appreciated a truly great villain. He may very well be going over the line of "good taste," but he got away with it. He announced that he is "the true world's champ and not a company champ like Hulk Hogan and Ric Flair...," Joel Goodheart led a chant of WWF sucks and promised to increase attendance by 25% each card and that attendance was up by 31% for this one...Kerry got great crowd approval, signed autographs like crazy and seemed to be the big draw of the day...6/9 sees their return at Temple with Lawler-Idol(like being in Memphis!), Fernandez-Nikita Koloff Russian Chain, Bob Orton-Orndorff, Cheetah-Pritchard & Stetson/Winters/Rebel vs. Redd/Drake/Hotbody... 4/21 in Huntington, N.Y. sees Ivan Koloff- Orndorff Russian Chain & Kamala-Studd (Oy Vay, does this one have the makings of a nightmare?)

GARY FISHMAN'S TIPS FOR THE UNCREATIVE BULLETIN EDITOR

1. Order a year's subscription to Dave Meltzer's Wrestling Observer.
2. Buy a home xerox machine.
3. Make believe you're Dave...it's **fun** to pretend!
4. Change the words a little so your plaigarism isn't **too** obvious...
5. Impress all your friends with your own newsletter!

CURFEW

Had a blast with Between The Ropes' Adam Horowitz and his co-editor and faithful valet Brad Burns at the Philly show- these are two wacky fun-loving guys...as a new sheet editor I get tons of materials and one that sticks out as truly different is Jeff Osborne's Cassette Wrestling News- you get to <u>hear</u> exclusive wrestler interviews as well as commentary from hardcore fans you always read. A tremendous treat & highly recommended-- $3.00 from PO Box 765, Boonville, In. 47601...thanks to Dan Reilly, Gary Fishman, Howard Feintuch, Boyce Johansen and Ron "Arena Report" Lemieux for all their help...Jody Boyns has moved his New England Wrestling Scene to 521 Pine St. (Apt. 304), Manchester N.H. 03104...Une Fruth of the European Wrestling Fan Association (Oppauer Str. 52/D-6700 Ludwigshafen/West Germany is looking for a history of the AWA title/a list of Japanese titles and info on Antonio Rocca...Dan Reilly sent in a clip of a weight loss clinic in Conn.--the director's name is Evan Ginsberg and the Executive Director is "Cookie Syrup"- sounds VERY SCARY to me...Just in- Nancy Sodano's Wrestling Off The Record ($1 from 52 Penn St. Quincy, Ma. 02169)- featured a profile on Sting, news, reader's pg... Am I just being nostalgic, or were almost **all** the major arena WWF cards of the Bruno/Graham eras superior to each and every Wrestlemania?...Bargain of the month- Vinnie Carolan's fine Pro Wrestling This Week- a steal at .50¢ (32 Taxiera Rd., Stoughton, Ma. 02072)...And finally, in the words of the immortal Gorgeous George- "Win if you can, lose if you must, but always cheat!"...Bye for now!